

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSM-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-12 MCT-01

HA-05 NEAE-00 /117 W

-----031524 291547Z /41

P 291527Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3623

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EG IS XF

SUBJECT: ACCENT ON FIRMNESS DEC 29

REF: CAIRO 23112

SUMMARY. MEDIA TREATMENT OF PEACE PROCESS TILTED TOWARD FIRMNESS DEC 29 ALTHOUGH WELL TEMPERED BY SADAT'S OPTIMISM. REMARKS BY SCHMIDT WELL RECEIVED. BEGIN SEEN RETRENCHING IN FACE OF DOMESTIC PRESSURE AND PLO EXHORTED TO ABANDON ERROR OF ITS WAYS. END SUMMARY.

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1. SADAT FIRM. TAKING CLUE FROM SADAT DEC 28 PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESS BANNERED "EGYPT OPPOSES LIMITS ON ITS FORCES IN SINAI AND PRESENCE OF ISRAELI FORCES ON WEST BANK" AND "I CALLED UPON BEGIN TO REASSESS HIS STAND." PRESS CONFERENCE LED OFF WITH SADAT'S REFUSAL TO AGREE TO LIMIT TROOP DEPLOYMENTS IN SINAI TO WEST OF GIDI AND

MITLA PASSES OR TO CONTINUED PRESENCE OF ISRAELI FORCES IN WEST BANK AND GAZA. REEMPHASIZED HIS CALLS FOR CREATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE AND RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO SELF-DETERMINATION. BEGIN HAD SAID IN JERUSALEM EGYPTIAN FORCES COULD NOT BE ALLOWED EAST OF PASSES BUT, SADAT SAID, THIS MUST BE NEGOTIATED IN MILITARY COMMITTEE.

2. JERUSALEM. SADAT STATED ARAB PART OF JERUSALEM SHOULD RETURN TO ARAB SOVEREIGNTY. "OUR POSITION IS THAT WHEN AGREEMENT REACHED ON COMPLETE RETURN OF LANDS OCCUPIED IN 1967, THIS WILL MEAN RETURN OF ARAB PART OF JERUSALEM TO ARAB SOVEREIGNTY. I MADE IT CLEAR TO ISRAEL."

3. FURTHER COVERAGE OF SADAT'S INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA WALTERS ALSO REPEATED POINT THAT EGYPT REJECTS PRESENCE OF EVEN ONE ISRAELI SOLDIER ON WEST BANK OR GAZA DESPITE ISRAELI ARGUMENTS ON SECURITY. TOLD NBC, IN SEPARATE INTERVIEW, ISRAELI OFFERS OF WITHDRAWAL CANNOT BE DESCRIBED AS CONCESSION SINCE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES ARE ARAB LANDS.

4. SADAT OPTIMISTIC. OFFICIAL PUBLIC OPTIMISM STILL ABUNDANT. SADAT TOLD PRESS CONFERENCE "I AM ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN OPTIMISTIC AT TIME WHEN ALL AROUND ME WERE PESSIMISTIC. I THINK WE SHALL REACH AN AGREEMENT "ON FUTURE OF WEST BANK. HE HAD TOLD UNCLASSIFIED

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SCHMIDT EGYPT AND ISRAEL "HAVE ARRIVED AT GREAT ACHIEVEMENT, I.E. WAR IS NOW UNTHINKABLE." REAL SUCCESS IS THAT FORTY DAYS AFTER VISIT TO JERUSALEM ISRAEL DIFFERING ON AUTONOMY AS OPPOSED TO SELF-DETERMINATION, "WHEREAS IT PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS LIBERATED LAND OF ISRAEL."

5. BOOST FROM SCHMIDT. SCHMIDT SAID EGYPT AND FRG ASSESSMENTS OF SITUATION COINCIDED. SADAT'S INITIATIVES REQUIRE OTHER ARABS RECONSIDER AND ADHERE TO NEGOTIATED SOLUTION. WEST GERMANY AGAINST OCCUPATION OF LANDS BY FORCE AND SUPPORTS RIGHT OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION. FRG WANTS TO HELP STABILIZE PEACE POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY. EDITORIALS SPOKE OF WARM BILATERAL RELATIONS, BUT AHRAH CALLED ON EUROPEANS AND WEST GERMANY TO TRANSCEND "PASSIVE ROLE". COURSE OF EVENTS "CALLS FOR MORE PARTICIPATION ON THEIR PART" I.E., PRESSURE ON ISRAEL.

6. PLO. UNUSUALLY STRONG AKHBAR EDITORIAL ENTITLED "FATAL MISTAKES OF PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP", AGREES WITH SADAT THAT PLO HAS DISADVANTAGED ITSELF BY REFUSING TO

PARTICIPATE IN CAIRO CONFERENCE. CLAIMED PALESTINIAN
ACTIVITY LONG CHARACTERIZED BY "NEGATIVE SYMPTOMS",
MAINLY INABILITY TO ESCAPE DOMINATION BY ARAB REGIMES
(READ SYRIA) WHOSE TACTICS INCLUDE "BLOODY LIQUIDATION"
OF PALESTINIANS. REPEATED MISTAKES AND BLUNDERS OF
OFFICIAL PALESTINIAN LEADERS SOMETIMES TANTAMOUNT TO CRIME
AGAINST PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, WHO PAYING DEARLY FOR INTERNAL
CONTRADICTIONS OF LEADERSHIP. INDEPENDENT, LUCID TRENDS
WITHIN PLO CANNOT WITHSTAND IDEOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSM-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-12 MCT-01
HA-05 NEAE-00 /117 W
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P 291527Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3625
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BONN
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TERRORISM OF SOME ARAB REGIMES. INSTEAD OF WAGING "MOCK
HEROIC BATTLES" AGAINST EGYPT, PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP
SHOULD COURAGEOUSLY RID ITSELF OF PRESSURES OF ARAB REGIMES
WHICH CONTROL PALESTINIAN CAUSE TO SERVE THEIR OWN IN-
TERESTS.

7. ISRAEL. PRESS PERCEIVES BEGIN VACILLATING UNDER
DOMESTIC PRESSURE. SAID BEGIN HAD PRODUCED AMENDMENTS TO

HIS PEACE PLAN AFTER ISMAILIA BUT THEN WITHDREW THEM.
ISRAELI OFFICIALS CITED FOR REPORT THAT BEGIN SENDING
COPY OF PEACE PLAN TO SADAT THRU AMBASSADOR EILTS WHICH
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WILL CONTAIN AMENDMENTS MADE FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH
PRESIDENT CARTER, BUT NOT AFTER ISMAILIA. ACCORDING PRESS
SOURCES, THIS "AMBIGUITY" DEMONSTRATES THAT "BEGIN UNDER
PRESSURE WHICH CAUSED HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND." LINK PER-
CEIVED WITH "MYSTERIOUS" DAYAN TRIP AND TOUGH LINE HE TOOK
ON RETURN THAT "ISRAEL WILL PREVENT ESTABLISHMENT OF
PALESTINIAN STATE BY FORCE." ACCORDING PRESS, THIS CON-
FLICTS WITH SADAT-BEGIN AGREEMENT THAT 1973 WAR WOULD BE
THE LAST.

8. U.S. "U.S. OFFICIALS" QUOTED IN AHRAH FOR BELIEF THAT
ISMAILIA TALKS MADE PROGRESS, BUT "WEST BANK PROBLEM VERY
COMPLICATED AND NO SOLUTION POSSIBLE IN ONE MEETING."
ISRAELI POSITION ON WEST BANK AUTONOMY "A MAJOR ISRAELI
RETREAT". HOWEVER, IT DID NOT MEET EGYPTIAN DEMANDS,
"WHICH REFLECT EGYPT'S LOYALTY TO ARAB INTERESTS." ALL
PAPERS ALSO PUBLISHED SHEIKH OF AL-AZHAR'S CALL FOR STRONG
U.S. SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIANS MADE TO POLCOUNS IN PRIVATE
MEETING DEC 28 (CAIRO 23110). RECALLED SHEIKH'S EXPLANA-
TION TO PRESIDENT CARTER OF IMPORTANCE OF JERUSALEM TO
MUSLIMS AND IMPOSSIBILITY OF PERMANENT PEACE WITHOUT
RESTORATION OF "ARABISM" OF JERUSALEM. EILTS

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